

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 allowed unprecedented freedom for radio broadcast stations to consolidate and form large conglomerates. These dominant market presences have resulted in a loss of "localism" in FM radio. While stations continue to broadcast locally, content from city to city and region to region has become homogenized and limited the introduction of new artists, reporters and programming genres. This homogenized product offering, while favorable to broadcasters, who can promote artists and formats which represent the most advantageous and profitable returns in the form of advertisement and recording industry affiliations, limits listener choice.

The advent of satellite radio, thus was both a welcome relief from this spiral of programming homogenization and a direct result of NRB's lobbying for the Telecommunications act of 1996. Thus NRB's petition against satellite radio broadcasts of local news and weather is both hypocritical and false. Satellite radio provides both greater choice in programming and promotes localism by providing regional broadcasts. The limitation of these broadcasts will only serve to deteriorate consumer choice and force national radio broadcasts by the ever increasing consolidation of NRB stations.

I urge you to deny the HR 4026 bill being proposed.